United Nations A/55/98

General Assembly

Distr.: General
29 June 2000

Original: English

**Fifty-fifth session**
Item 29 of the preliminary list*
**Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe**

# Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe

## Report of the Secretary-General

## I. Introduction

1. On 15 December 1999, the General Assembly adopted resolution 54/117 on cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). In that resolution, the Assembly acknowledged the increasing contribution of OSCE to the establishment and maintenance of international peace and security in its region through activities in early warning and preventive diplomacy, including through the activities of the High Commissioner on National Minorities, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation, as well as arms control and disarmament. The Assembly also noted with appreciation the further improvement of cooperation and coordination over the past year between the United Nations and OSCE and welcomed, in that context, the participation of the Secretary-General and high-level United Nations representatives in the meetings of the Permanent Council of OSCE and the participation of the Secretary-General in the Summit of OSCE, held in Istanbul in November 1999. The Assembly requested the Secretary-General to continue exploring with the Chairman-in-Office and the Secretary General of OSCE possibilities for further enhancement of cooperation, information exchange and coordination between the United Nations and OSCE.

2. In the same resolution, the General Assembly decided to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-fifth session the item entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe" and requested the Secretary-General to submit to the Assembly at that session a report on cooperation between the United Nations and OSCE in implementation of the resolution. The present report is submitted pursuant to that request.

## II. Measures of cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe

3. At the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), held at Helsinki in 1992, the heads of State or Government of the participating States declared that the Conference was a regional arrangement in the sense of Chapter VIII of the Charter

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of the United Nations. In resolution 48/5 of 13 October 1993, the General Assembly decided to invite CSCE[1] to participate in the work of the Assembly as an observer.

4. On 26 May 1993, letters were exchanged between the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Chairman-in-Office of the Council of CSCE (see A/48/185, annexes I and II). By those letters, the signatories accepted the arrangements described in the framework for cooperation and coordination between the two organizations (A/48/185, annex II, appendix).

5. The observer status of OSCE and the framework agreement referred to above constitute the institutional parameters of cooperation between the United Nations and OSCE.

6. As noted in previous reports on cooperation and coordination with OSCE (A/48/549, A/49/529, A/50/564, A/51/489 and Add.1, A/52/450, A/53/672 and A/54/537 and Corr.1), good contacts have been established with the Chairman-in-Office of OSCE. I have also been pleased to note that OSCE, in its November 1999 Istanbul Summit declaration, pledged to work closely with other international organizations and institutions on the basis of the Platform for Cooperative Security, which OSCE adopted as part of its Charter. During the past year, a number of meetings took place between officials of the United Nations and OSCE at United Nations Headquarters, at the United Nations Office at Geneva and at OSCE headquarters in Vienna. Of particular note, on 24 and 25 February 2000, the Director-General of the United Nations Office at Geneva hosted the ninth high-level meeting of the United Nations-OSCE-Council of Europe tripartite process of informal consultations. This year's theme was peace and stability in south-eastern Europe. For the first time, a representative of the European Commission also attended and was invited to become a regular partner in the process. Such meetings demonstrate the continued relevance of this process as a tool to improve the complementarity of activities undertaken by the participating organizations. The meeting was preceded by a target-oriented tripartite meeting on "Law enforcement, in particular the police: operations in south-eastern Europe".

7. In view of the limited financial, material and human resources made available by Member States, the United Nations and OSCE have continued to practise a division of labour based on the comparative advantages of the two organizations. The United Nations has retained the lead in peacemaking efforts in Abkhazia, Georgia, and in Tajikistan, while OSCE has retained the lead in the Republic of Moldova, South Ossetia, Georgia, and in the resolution of the conflict in and around the Nagorny Karabakh region of Azerbaijan. Specific efforts have also been made to improve consultation and cooperation in the field and between the respective headquarters. These steps have resulted in enhanced coordination with the aim of making better use of the resources of the international community in the interests of the countries being assisted.

8. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) cooperates with OSCE, primarily with its Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) and with the High Commissioner on National Minorities (HCNM). The cooperation included a continuous exchange of information, publications and coordination of activities. UNDP participation and organization of events included a workshop for ombudsman and human rights institutions in Almaty. Attended by 26 countries, the discussion included means of improving effectiveness, preventing ethnic conflict and guaranteeing minority rights, human rights education and pluralism of the media. Other mutual activities included projects in the area of human rights protection institutions, gender issues, civil society, and the rule of law; joint assistance in the drafting of a law on an ombudsman institution in Central Asia; and coordination of assistance to institutions in Albania, Estonia and Georgia. Examples of joint UNDP and OSCE activities carried out at the country level include preparations for local elections in Albania. Cooperation in Latvia focused on issues of social integration and human rights and in Estonia on support for language training for the non-Estonian population. Cooperation in Ukraine continued through support to the Office of the Ombudsman and to the resettlement of the formerly deported people in Crimea. OSCE and UNDP also provided support to the presidential elections, including technical assistance to the Central Election Commission.

9. In preparation for the presidential and parliamentary elections in Tajikistan, UNDP and OSCE provided a series of seminars, aimed at policy makers, on legislation and revision of the electoral laws of Tajikistan; the furthering of human rights through an information exchange on the role and activities of an ombudsman institution and its future in Tajikistan; and

strengthening the independence of the judiciary. An ongoing initiative is the support to civic education project, financed by contributions to a United Nations trust fund and implemented by OSCE, which is aimed at providing civic education and the creation of a civil society culture. It is anticipated that, as the process of transition from the post-conflict context to longer-term sustainable human development progresses, collaboration between UNDP and OSCE will expand to encompass increasingly complex issues related to policy support and reform. Discussions are already under way to ensure complementarity and coordination of initiatives.

10. The UNDP office in Kosovo, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, in close collaboration with OSCE, the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), the Government of Japan and the United Nations Office for Project Services, has begun the implementation of a media and public information capacity-development programme to address the present lack of television and radio broadcasting facilities in Kosovo. It is envisaged that the project will contribute substantially to information dissemination during the municipal elections in Kosovo.

11. The Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) and OSCE member Governments have given a strong mandate to their respective organizations to foster cooperation; both organizations share the same membership and address similar challenges. This cooperation is particularly important in view of the challenges both organizations face with regard to economic post-conflict reconstruction and the implementation of the Stability Pact in south-eastern Europe. ECE research and economic analysis, and the development of norms, standards and conventions for pan-European economic integration in transport, environment and other fields, are provided for OSCE economic forums and seminars. As evidence of this special relationship, in June 2000, the Executive Secretary of ECE was invited to address the Permanent Council of OSCE in Vienna, the first time a representative of ECE had attended such a meeting.

12. Over the past year, ECE contributed to various economic activities of OSCE and participated in a number of meetings, including the OSCE Istanbul Summit, the eighth OSCE Economic Forum on "Economic aspects of post-conflict rehabilitation: the challenges of transformation", and a conference on subregional cooperation in Nantes, France, organized by OSCE in partnership with ECE, which facilitated an exchange of experiences among subregional organizations in the areas of energy, environment, corruption and social disparities among the countries of the region.

13. ECE and OSCE have begun to give more attention to economic and environmental factors and their security implications. ECE can assist OSCE in monitoring issues such as the wide income gap between the countries of Europe, where the hope of economic convergence, particularly for the economies of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and south-eastern Europe, is not bright. This gap poses a threat to the creation of a more united and stable Europe. Within countries, growing disparities in levels of income may have security implications, especially when the situation of entire layers of society is becoming unbearable, with little hope for improvement. There is considerable scope for cooperation between ECE and OSCE in the environmental field, which is also relevant to security concerns.

14. The relationship between the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and OSCE has developed into a comprehensive strategic partnership, focusing on the prevention of mass displacement, the recognition of the critical linkage between displacement and security, and the need to address the human dimension of conflict-resolution processes. A memorandum of understanding with the OSCE secretariat, as well as letters of understanding with both ODIHR and HCNM, were implemented in regular meetings and consultations at all levels between UNHCR and almost all OSCE bodies, institutions and missions. UNHCR has contributed to numerous OSCE-organized seminars and review conferences on matters of common concern. The Charter for European Security reaffirmed the commitment of OSCE participating States to a number of principles of core concern to UNHCR, namely, respect of the right to seek asylum, international protection of refugees, as set out in the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, as well as the right to nationality and international protection of stateless persons. Cooperation at the headquarters level has developed beyond information sharing to include consultations on operational design and policy development. It is, however, mostly at the field level that the UNHCR-OSCE partnership first gained

strength and needs to be continuously refined and focused — in order to minimize duplication while maximizing synergies.

15. In the region of the Commonwealth of Independent States, the CIS conference continues to provide a platform for cooperation. As the official follow-up process came to an end with the last Steering Group, meeting in July 2000, recommendations are being made for a thematic approach focusing on current priorities. UNHCR offices in the five Central Asian countries enjoy close cooperation with OSCE counterparts. In Tajikistan, in close coordination with UNHCR, OSCE is engaged in the monitoring of the human rights of returnees. UNHCR and OSCE offices in southern Kyrgyzstan have increased and enhanced international monitoring of the volatile Ferghana Valley. With regard to Armenia and Azerbaijan, UNHCR supports the OSCE Minsk Group process relating to the conflict in and around the Nagorny Karabakh region of Azerbaijan and maintains close contacts and consults regularly on issues related to the needs of the displaced population and refugees.

16. In Georgia, at the request of the Government, OSCE has been assisting in the political settlement relating to South Ossetia since 1993. UNHCR is a partner in the Joint Control Commission that was established to facilitate that effort. UNHCR contributes to the conflict-resolution process through the voluntary repatriation of refugees and the return of internally displaced persons, as well as their reintegration, mainly in the South Ossetian conflict zone and, to a lesser extent, in the government-controlled areas of Georgia. UNHCR, which assists Chechen refugees in the Pankisi Valley, benefits considerably from the presence of an OSCE monitoring team at the Georgian border with the Russian Federation in terms of early warning and security information on the border and the near regions of southern Chechnya.

17. In the Russian Federation, UNHCR has had regular contact with the OSCE Assistance Group to Chechnya. Prior to its redeployment for safety reasons, UNHCR had regular contact with the Group, which provided useful information on the humanitarian situation in Chechnya. UNHCR remains in touch with the Group concerning ongoing developments. UNHCR is also working closely with HCNM in addressing the question of the Meskhetian Turks, a formerly deported people, a large number of whom reside in southern Russia. A joint expert mission to Georgia from the Council of Europe, OSCE and UNHCR took place in July 1999 to evaluate the conditions in their areas of origin in that country.

18. In the Republic of Moldova, the 1992 conflict over Trans-Dniestr displaced more than 100,000 people, some of whom have not returned home. Displacement issues and the right of return do not yet constitute a distinct agenda item between the sides. UNHCR maintains a close working relationship with OSCE as the prime organization responsible for mediation in the conflict. In Ukraine, UNHCR enjoys ongoing cooperation with HCNM within the framework of inter-agency support to integrate the formerly deported people returning to Crimea.

19. In the Balkans, UNHCR has collaborated extensively with the OSCE Kosovo Verification Mission (KVM) and the OSCE Spill-over Monitor Mission to Skopje on several issues related to the Kosovo crisis in general and issues that relate to the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Having been evacuated from Kosovo in March 1999, KVM provided UNHCR with invaluable material and personnel support, allowing close collaboration in refugee registration, communications, border monitoring, exchange of information and political analysis. Currently, the UNHCR office in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia cooperates with OSCE in many areas, including the training of journalists, policy issues on Roma refugees, capacity-building for Roma local non-governmental organizations, citizenship and statelessness, Kosovo elections and the participation of Kosovo refugees, and information sharing on issues related to the trafficking in human beings.

20. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, UNHCR and OSCE have participated in coordinating groups set up under the umbrella of the Human Rights Steering Board. UNHCR protection and field officers are cooperating with OSCE human rights officers through existing working groups. OSCE and UNHCR also work closely on the implementation of property legislation. In Croatia, UNHCR, OSCE and the European Commission Monitoring Mission have shared tasks on return-related issues. Primary issues of concern have been officially divided, with OSCE taking the lead for reconstruction, occupied property, tenancy rights, mediation in the traffic of real estate, and security, and UNHCR taking the lead for issues relating to returnee status benefits, humanitarian assistance, social welfare, health insurance, citizenship, pensions, formal habitual

residents and requests for return. OSCE and UNHCR share responsibility for cases concerning detention and human rights violations. In Albania, UNHCR and OSCE have established close lines of contact, particularly during the Kosovo refugee influx. Relations have become more fluid with the participation of UNHCR in the framework of the "Friends of Albania" forum presided over by OSCE. UNHCR and OSCE have also participated in informal meetings to support nascent structures for trafficked women. While the UNHCR role is catalytic, OSCE plays a functional role by giving political support to the operational agencies dealing with the problem.

21. The United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (UNMIBH) and United Nations agencies and programmes operating there have continued to cooperate with OSCE in various fields. UNMIBH has supported OSCE in its election-related activities, with civil affairs officers having served on OSCE-chaired inter-agency committees to review various aspects of the electoral process, including the compliance of political parties with OSCE electoral rules and regulations, the registration and approval of new political parties and implementation of election results. There has also been cooperation on property-related issues and a sharing of information on police misconduct and human rights violations, and on return-related incidents. In addition, UNMIBH and OSCE have jointly monitored particularly sensitive and significant criminal trials, such as those involving war crimes, and allegations of police misconduct against senior law enforcement officials.

22. By its resolution 1244 (1999), the Security Council established the United Nations Interim Administration in Kosovo. In an unprecedented international effort to assist the people of Kosovo, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, the United Nations entered into a direct partnership with OSCE and the European Union in order to enhance the capabilities and capacities of each of the organizations. In Kosovo, the United Nations and OSCE are working jointly under the leadership of the United Nations. A division of functions between the two has been established, with OSCE taking the main role in institution-building, which includes police education and development, media development, protection of human rights, the rule of law, democratization and the organization of elections. Cooperation also extends to a number of areas such as policy matters relating to returns, registration and elections, missing persons, property rights, rule of law and the judiciary, civil society issues, minority protection and human rights.

23. Coordination between UNMIK and OSCE is ensured through working groups and consultations, at both the management and working levels. In addition, the UNMIK Office of the Legal Adviser works closely with OSCE lawyers on various matters, including the drafting of regulations and administrative directions. The United Nations and OSCE have also jointly developed and implemented the concept of the Joint Interim Administrative Structure, which brings representatives of the local community to participate in the interim administration of the province. It participates at all levels of interim administration, from the headquarters level to the municipalities.

24. Since the end of 1999, OSCE, in close collaboration with the UNMIK civil administration, has been providing training for the public sector in municipalities. OSCE has now established an Institute for Civil Administration, which cooperates with the Department of Local Administration in training programmes aimed at the development of a professional local civil service at the central and municipal levels.

25. On return-related issues, the UNMIK Working Group on the Return of Ethnic Albanians, presided over by the Human Rights Office in the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, includes UNHCR, UNMIK civil administration and police, OSCE and the European Union. It is responsible for the preparation of strategies on, and operational monitoring of, forced returns from third countries. The enlarged Advisory Committee on Albanian Returns, in which the International Security Force in Kosovo (KFOR), the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) also participate, monitors all returns, both voluntary and forcible. UNHCR and OSCE have also worked closely together on the assessment of proposals for the return of minorities, particularly Kosovo Serbs, to their places of origin in Kosovo. OSCE is represented, alongside UNHCR, in the UNMIK-sponsored Joint Commission on Kosovo Serb Returns, which resulted from political consultations with the Kosovo Serb community.

26. The Victim Recovery and Identification Commission, inaugurated on 11 May 2000, is another

example of cooperation between the two organizations. UNMIK civil administration and OSCE have worked closely with the International Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia to develop a system whereby the remains exhumed by the Tribunal are identified and returned to the families.

27. On electoral matters, a Joint Registration Task Force has been established to jointly plan, provide with resources and execute civil and voter registration, including the registration of Kosovo inhabitants outside the province by IOM. Collaboration has also taken place to ensure the respect of voting rights of recognized refugees for the Kosovo municipal elections.

28. Cooperation also extends to judicial matters. The United Nations has primary responsibility for bringing about the physical and personnel conditions for the reestablishment of the judicial system, and OSCE has made a valuable contribution to this process by providing logistical support and supplies, as well as transport for judges and prosecutors. The United Nations, UNHCR and OSCE are cooperating in monitoring ongoing trials in the Kosovo courts. The United Nations and OSCE are also working jointly to enhance the capacity of local legal professionals through training programmes for local judges and prosecutors and the development of a Kosovo bar examination. The United Nations, through its executive police force field training programme, and OSCE, through the Kosovo police service school, are also developing the future Kosovo police service (KPS). A strategic plan for the training and deployment of more than 3,500 KPS officers by January 2001 relies on the continuing close cooperation between the OSCE-run police school and UNMIK field training and enforcement operations. KPS is one of the most successful examples of a multi-ethnic and gender-balanced institution in Kosovo, with 15 to 20 per cent ethnic minorities and 25 per cent women. The KPS school, run by OSCE, also provides training to local correctional officers working under the supervision of the United Nations.

29. Cooperation between UNHCR and OSCE on minority protection and related issues in Kosovo has been unprecedented in a multidimensional peacekeeping operation. Close cooperation between the two began in Kosovo in October 1998 and continued during the refugee crisis in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and in Albania in 1999. This cooperation was further strengthened when UNHCR and OSCE began their work together within the UNMIK structure. The field staff of the two organizations coordinate closely with the UNMIK local community officers who have been deployed to selected municipalities throughout Kosovo in order to enhance protection and access to essential services for local non-Albanian groups. Furthermore, an Ad Hoc Task Force on Minorities was established, under the chairmanship of the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, in which representatives from United Nations entities, OSCE, ICRC and KFOR participate. The Task Force is a forum for monitoring the situation of minority groups and for making policy recommendations to enhance their protection and welfare. Between June 1999 and June 2000, UNHCR and OSCE have jointly produced five reports on the situation of ethnic minorities in Kosovo.

30. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and OSCE have a number of cooperative efforts under way in Kosovo, including measures to ensure the protection of children within the legal system through the UNICEF juvenile justice project established in September 1999. UNICEF cooperates with OSCE on its implementation, as well as on a number of complementary juvenile justice activities. The project is currently supporting legislative reform efforts that come within the UNMIK civil administration pillar. UNICEF and OSCE are also creating a training programme for judges, prosecutors and defence attorneys as a means of improving the handling of cases against juveniles. UNICEF and OSCE, in cooperation with the latter's police academy, are working on formalizing training for national and international police officers on the proper treatment of juveniles. Through information sharing and joint case discussion, UNICEF and the OSCE legal affairs section are monitoring the status of children apprehended by the police, children in detention and children in court. To prevent at-risk youth and street children from coming into conflict with the law, UNICEF supports a pilot street-worker project in Pristina, which will expand eventually to other urban centres. UNICEF and OSCE are also drafting new legislative initiatives for the protection of victims of domestic violence, in line with the elements of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. UNICEF is an active member of two task forces on trafficking in human beings in Kosovo. The focus of

the second, presided over by OSCE, is on legislative reform.

31. The World Food Programme (WFP) has maintained mutually beneficial cooperation with OSCE in Kosovo. The OSCE civil registration campaign has proved to be an invaluable source of information for WFP as it continues the transition from emergency food assistance to an UNMIK-led permanent social assistance scheme. However, food assistance is only a small component of the larger humanitarian effort to provide basic needs, minimum security levels and assurance of basic human rights to the minority communities in Kosovo. In that respect, coordination at the field level is imperative. With OSCE assistance, WFP is kept informed of daily population movements and changing needs of the largely isolated minority community. In turn, WFP is able to respond quickly to the needs of the vulnerable minority populations.

32. As the emergency relief needs of Kosovo have been largely met, the UNMIK humanitarian affairs component, led by UNHCR, was to phase out of the UNMIK structure by July 2000. UNHCR will remain operational, albeit with a reduced programme, and a United Nations humanitarian coordinator will liaise directly with UNMIK at the senior management level. However, UNHCR will continue to work closely with OSCE to promote protection, ensure assistance and enhance freedom of movement for minorities, as well as to engage in longer-term confidence-building measures.

33. In Albania, UNICEF and OSCE have collaborated extensively on institution-building and on strengthening the rights of the child. The onset of the war in Kosovo, and the subsequent arrival of more than 450,000 refugees, extended the partnership beyond this initial foundation. In particular, UNICEF was able to disseminate the core elements of its protection regime for children and vulnerable groups through the country-wide network of OSCE field offices. Even with the return home of most refugees, the two organizations continue to work in close partnership on advocacy for children and their community.

34. The IOM cooperates with OSCE throughout the Balkans, including registration of Kosovars living outside Kosovo for the carrying out of municipal elections in 2000. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, given the increasing national involvement in the conduct of elections, IOM took an advisory role in 1999, but continues to directly manage out-of-country voting in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. In the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, with the critical cooperation of OSCE, IOM undertook large-scale registration and compiled a database for refugees housed in camps, which served as a basis for a massive humanitarian evacuation programme and for family reunion. In Croatia, IOM and OSCE cooperated in the return of displaced persons and in solving complex issues in particular municipalities. In Albania, OSCE and IOM have been consulting on options to jointly address issues of trafficking in human beings.

35. In Ukraine, IOM has engaged in business development, social services and non-governmental organization capacity-building projects related to an OSCE-led joint strategy for the return and reintegration of formerly deported peoples. Recently, IOM and OSCE jointly developed a programme to support the establishment of a national council against trafficking in human beings. In Kyrgyzstan, OSCE and IOM have concluded an agreement for joint research on trafficking of migrants, in particular women and children. In Tajikistan, IOM and OSCE have participated in an inter-agency framework for the return of Tajik refugees from Turkmenistan. In Estonia, IOM and OSCE have been implementing projects to promote the integration into Estonian society of the wives of former Soviet officers. In Latvia, with OSCE political support, IOM is carrying out a project to assist non-citizens of Russian origin to return to Russia.

36. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights has also maintained constructive contacts with OSCE. The Office's field offices in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Kosovo consult with OSCE counterparts on a range of human rights issues, including the safeguarding of property rights, the right to return and the administration of justice. In addition, a joint mission to address human rights training needs in Kosovo was undertaken in May 2000 between the Office, OSCE, and the Council of Europe as part of a broader initiative, also including the European Union, to work together on training projects for field missions. The Office and ODIHR maintain close institutional links and a regular exchange of information. They have worked together on a number of issues, including the development of national human rights institutions in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, and the elaboration of strategies to address the problem of trafficking in human beings.

The Office has participated in several conferences organized by ODIHR during the year, including a seminar on internal displacement in the south Caucasus, held in Tbilisi in May 2000, and another conference the same month in Warsaw on children and armed conflict. Consultation with OSCE comprises an important part of the Office's approach to technical cooperation projects in countries, including Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Tajikistan.

37. The bulk of cooperation between the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and OSCE takes place in the context of United Nations operations in Georgia, Tajikistan and, to a more limited extent, the Russian Federation. In the Russian Federation, the Office, the Humanitarian Coordinator and OSCE continue to cooperate and exchange information at the working level on issues related to the northern Caucasus. Good collaboration and cooperation exist between the United Nations system and OSCE in Tajikistan. In addition to close cooperation in political affairs, United Nations agencies have been working with OSCE in the promotion of human rights, civic education and capacity-building of the Government and political parties. In Georgia, the complementarity of the Office and OSCE mandates and activities has ensured a high degree of contact between the Resident/Humanitarian Coordinator and the OSCE mission, principally in South Ossetia. With regard to South Ossetia, OSCE has displayed a consistent willingness to maintain an open and collaborative exchange of information with the United Nations Humanitarian Coordinator and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. In addition, OSCE has cooperated with the Office on issues of mutual concern, for example, attracting donor assistance to the region and regular liaison with the de facto authorities in situ. Both efforts are aimed at facilitating the creation of humanitarian space, that is, the creation of an environment within which agencies can operate and carry out both humanitarian and transitional programmes that may in turn facilitate and engender conflict resolution. Cooperation occurs predominantly in the form of OSCE attendance at information-sharing meetings sponsored by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, at which OSCE representatives often provide security and political updates to humanitarian agencies operating in the conflict area.

38. The United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia frequently provides logistical support to OSCE, and both the Chairperson-in-Office and her personal representative visited the area during the year. Furthermore, in accordance with a memorandum of understanding signed between the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and OSCE, the latter has assigned a representative to the United Nations Human Rights Office in Abkhazia, Georgia, the mandate of which includes promoting respect for human rights, contributing to a safe and dignified return of refugees and internally displaced persons, and reporting on human rights developments. OSCE has actively supported the lead role of the United Nations in the Geneva peace process aimed at achieving a comprehensive political settlement of the conflict in Abkhazia. It takes part in high-level negotiations in Geneva, regular sessions of the Coordinating Council held in the field, and meetings on confidence-building measures convened at the invitation of host Governments.

39. In Tajikistan, during the past year the United Nations and OSCE have continued to cooperate closely in the process of the implementation of the General Agreement on the Establishment of Peace and National Accord between the Government of Tajikistan and the United Tajik Opposition of 27 June 1997, through their respective missions in the country. The Joint Election Observation Mission in Tajikistan monitored the preparatory stage and the polling during the elections to the newly established professional parliament, as foreseen by the General Agreement. The election marked the final stage of more than seven years of successful peacemaking and peacekeeping involvement of the two organizations, where comparative advantages and strengths of the United Nations and OSCE had been effectively utilized for achieving peace and reconciliation. The newly established United Nations Tajikistan Office of Peace-building and the OSCE mission in the country are interacting closely on issues related to consolidation of peace, promotion of the rule of law and democratization.

40. It is evident that cooperation between the United Nations and OSCE has continued to prosper. Over the past year, this has been in particular evidence in Kosovo, where the two organizations operated in direct partnership in the important task of peace-building. This has added to the valuable practice of burden-

sharing, which has come to characterize relations between the United Nations and OSCE.

*Notes*

[1] At the Summit conference of heads of State and Government of the participating States of CSCE, held at Budapest on 5 and 6 December 1994, it was agreed to change the name of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, effective 1 January 1995 (see A/49/800-S/1994/1435).